

# ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION SOURCES USED BY ACADEMIC AND NON ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES OF SELECTED COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE IN OYO STATE IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** The study analysed the information sources to academic and non-academic employees of selected colleges of agriculture in Oyo State Nigeria. Study data were obtained from random sample of senior level (CONTIS 8 and above) academic and non-academic employees of Federal College of Animal Health (FCAH) Moor Plantation, Ibadan and Federal College of Forestry (FCF) in Oyo State, Nigeria. Majority (75.3%) of the respondents were between the ages categories 30-40 years few (12.9%) were above 40 years old. Many (65.9%) were male, while 72.9% were married. Among the respondents, majority (78.9%) had only one child while majority (67%) had 5 years working experiences in their colleges. On the educational attainment, 31.8% had BSc. and MSc. degrees respectively while very few (4.7%) had PhD degree. The study found that majority (88.2%) of the respondents earns more than 1.3million Naira/year (USD 8,417/year). The finding shows that the most frequent sources of information for academic staff include; Internet ( $\bar{X} = 3.13$ ), Journal publications ( $\bar{X} = 3.10$ ), and CD-ROM ( $\bar{X} = 2.82$ ) while the major sources of information to non-academic staff include Books ( $\bar{X} = 3.12$ ), other colleagues ( $\bar{X} = 2.98$ ) and Radio ( $\bar{X} = 2.95$ ). The t-test analysis comparing the significant difference in the information sources to academic and non-academic staff shows significant difference in the information sources between the two categories. Study concluded that employees of selected colleges of agriculture obtain information from many sources, but the most important of these sources include; newspaper, television, other research institutes and radio. Study recommended that the institutions should improve on these facilities to improve the quality of information the employees of these institutions are having access to.

**Keywords:** Information sources, Academics and non-academics Staff, Agricultural Colleges, Oyo State and Nigeria.

## Introduction

The sources from which employees of organisations obtained information determine the accuracy of information obtained from the numerous or various sources. According to Robbins (1993) as cited by Lumley et. al. (2011), the formation of specific goals, feedback on progress towards these goals, and reinforcement of desired behaviour all stimulate motivation and require communication. The fewer distortions, ambiguities and incongruities that occur in communication within organisations, the more satisfied employees will feel with regard to their work (Robbins, 1993).

Employees prefer work that is mentally challenging in that it provides them with opportunities to use their skills and abilities and offers a variety of tasks, freedom and feedback on how well they are doing (Robbins 1993). These information or feedback could only be communicated to employees by the management through effective communication. Spectator (1997), identified communication as one of the nine facets of job satisfaction, others include; pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers and nature of the work. This shows that communication plays significant roles in the job satisfaction of organisations' employees. Information sources in an organisation

## Information sources in an organisation

Popoola (2006) defined information as facts, ideas, opinions, news, messages, symbols, sounds, codes, databases, images, and processed data that are capable of improving the knowledge state of the

user. Riley (2012) posited that data and information come from many sources - both internal (inside the business/organisation) and external.

Kirk (1999) while citing Porter, 1985, Owen et al, 1996, Grimshaw, 1995, Broadbent, 1977, opined that organisations are increasingly aware of the potential of information in providing competitive advantage and sustaining their success as evidenced in a number of published case studies and commentaries. He further posited that the descriptions of information as an asset and a resource are no longer unusual when he cited Burk & Horton (1988) and Best, (1996). However, the origin of these descriptions in classical economics ignores the place of information in the fabric of a political system or culture of an organisation. If information is to provide competitive advantage then its full potential needs to be considered (Kirk, 1999).

Reporting (Braham, 1989) work, Kirk (1999) stated that a very useful hierarchy of definitions of information has been developed in the area of information policy studies. The hierarchy is applicable to organisations for a number of reasons; firstly, it recognises the qualitative differences among definitions of information; secondly, its macro view is more appropriate to organisations than definitions based only on the individual as an information user; thirdly, it provides a range of definitions which are useful in different situations; and fourthly, it foreshadows the need for information policy in organisations.

According to Kirk (1999), when he quoted Braham (1998), the hierarchy consists of four levels, each based on a category of definitions drawn from many different fields. (1) Information as a resource. "Information, its creators, processors and users are viewed as discrete and isolated entities. Information comes in pieces unrelated to bodies of knowledge or information flows into which it might be organised" (Braman, 1989). (2) Information as a commodity. Complementary to definitions of information as a commodity is the concept of an information production chain through which information gains in economic value. The notion of information as a commodity incorporates "the exchange of information among people and related activities as well as its use" (Braman, 1989) and implies buyers, sellers and a market. In contrast to the absence of power of information as a resource, information as a commodity has economic power. (3) Information as perception of pattern. Here the concept of information is broadened by the addition of context.

Information "has a past and a future, is affected by motive and other environmental and casual factors, and itself has effects" (Braman, 1989). The concept of information and its processes is broadened so much so that information in this sense can be applied to a highly articulated social structure. Information has a power of its own although its effects are isolated. The example given is of information reducing uncertainty but only in regard to a single specific question. (4) Information as a constitutive force in society. Information has a role in shaping context. "Information is not just affected by its environment, but is itself an actor affecting other elements in the environment" (Braman, 1989). The definitions in this category "apply to the entire range of phenomena and processes in which information is involved, can be applied to a social structure of any degree of articulation and complexity, and grant information, its flow and use an enormous power in constructing our social (and ultimately physical) reality" (Braman, 1989).

The role of information in institutional development cannot be undermined. The sources from which information are sought whether internal or external will affect the quality of such information and the performance of the recipients of the information. The role played by the academic and non-academic employees of educational institutions has a direct bearing on the information employees of institutions are able to access, it is in this light that this study analysed the information sources used by academic and non-academic employees of Federal College of Animal Health (FCAH) Moor Plantation, Ibadan and Federal College of Forestry (FCF) in Oyo State in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective: of the study is to analyse information sources to academic and non-academic employees of selected colleges of agriculture in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to (1) describe the personal characteristics of employees of academic and non-academic of selected colleges of agriculture; (2) identify the sources of information to employees of selected colleges of agriculture in Oyo State Nigeria; (3) identify the differences in the information sources between the academic and non-academic employees of the selected colleges of agriculture; and (4) determine the frequency of obtaining information from the different sources by the academic and non-academic employees.

**Table 1:** Sampling selection and procedures

Number of Research Institute in Oyo State	Number of Research Institute purposely selected for the study(28.6 percent)	Names of Institutions	Total Population of Academic	Sample selected 15%	Total population of Non- Academics	Sample selected 15%
		FCF	122	18.3	172	25.8
7	2	FCAH	155	23.3	275	41.3
		Sub Total		41.6		67.1
		<b>Total Sample Size</b>	<b>108.7</b>			

**Hypothesis of the study**

(1) There is no significant difference in the information sources to academic and non-academic staffs of selected Colleges of Agriculture in Oyo State, Nigeria

**Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprises of academic and non-academic staff of Federal College of Animal Health Moor Plantation and Federal College of Forestry in Oyo State.

**Sample size and sampling procedure**

The multistage sampling technique was used in the selection of respondents. Firstly, two research institutes namely Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN) and Institute of Agricultural Research & Training (IAR&T) were selected because of their affiliation with college of agriculture. In the second stage, the senior staffs (CONTISS 8 and above) were chosen and stratified into two categories teaching and non-teaching staffs. Lastly, from these categories 30 percent of the staffs of these two categories were selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. The sample selection procedures are as presented below in Table 1.

**Personal characteristics of respondents**

Table 2 shows the age distribution of respondents, it shows that few (11.8%) of the respondents were below age 30 years, majority were between ages 30-

40years while 12.9% fell within age 40years and above. This implies that majority of the respondents are still in their active age and still have many years to contribute to the attainment of the organisational goals. Hence, the organisations need to make enough incentives available to ensure they are satisfied with their jobs. Table1 further shows that gender distribution of respondents, it shows that many (65.9%) were male while the remaining (34.1%) were female. The higher percentage of male respondents could be attributed to higher responsibility expected from men as the head of the family; hence, they had to take up appointment in organisations like the two colleges to sustain their family members.

The table also shows the marital status of the respondents, it shows that few (27.1%) of the respondents were single while majority (72.9%) of the respondents are married. This implies that the organisations need to make provision for incentives that will have positive effects on the family members of the staff such as good health facilities; this will go a long way to improve the respondents' job satisfaction. Majority of the respondents were married. In addition, the table shows the numbers of children of respondents, it shows that (78.9%), (20%), and (1.2%) of the respondents had one, two and three children respectively. The number of children given birth to by the respondents could help to reduce distraction from home as number of

Table 2: Frequency Distribution Showing Personal Characteristics of Respondents (n=85).

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
<b>Age (Years)</b>		
Below 30	10	11.8
30 – 40	64	75.3
Above 40	11	12.9
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	56	65.9
Female	29	34.1
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	23	27.1
Married	62	72.9
<b>Number of Children</b>		
1	67	78.9
2	17	20.0
3	1	1.2
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	74	87.1
Islam	11	12.9

Source: Field survey, 2013.

children has influence on level of responsibility which could turn out to be distraction if the situation is not properly handled.

Table 2 also shows the educational status of respondents, it revealed that few (31.8%) of the respondents were B.Sc. holders while (9.4%), (22.4%), (31.8%) and (4.7%) are OND, HND, M.sc and PhD holder respectively. The high number of BSc. holders and above could be attributed to the fact that the respondents were employees of educational institutions. On respondents years of experience of respondents, the study showed that respondents with 5years experience constituted (67%), while years of experience of 6-10years, 11-15years, were possessed by (24.7%) and (7.1%), respectively. The remaining

1.2% had experience of 16 years and above. This implies that many (67%) of the respondents were mid-career officers with few numbers of years of experience, which could have implication the turnover rate in the organisation. This implies that a respondent that has the experience of 5 years has the highest percentage. Finally, Table 1 showed that annual income of majority (88.2%) of respondents was 1.3 million Naira (USD 8,417) while few (1.2%) earn below 400,000 Naira/ annum (USD2, 589/year) as their basic salary. The relatively high income per annum could be attributed to the fact that the respondents for the study are level 8 and above officers of the selected colleges.

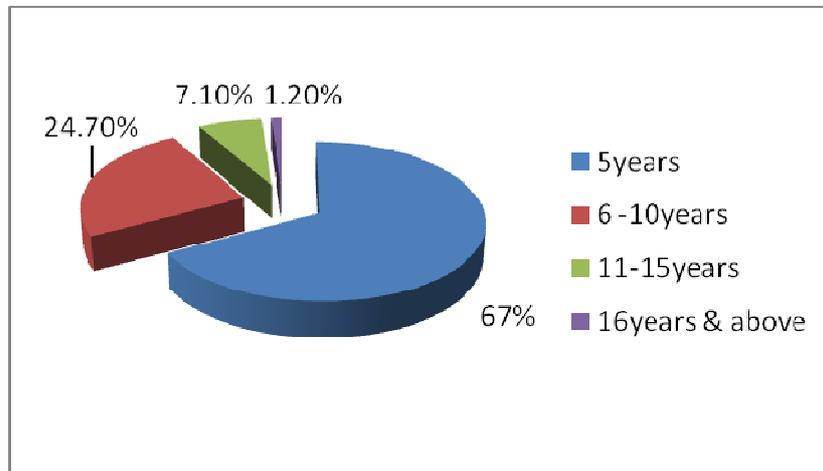


Fig 1: Pie Chart Showing Respondents' Years of Experience

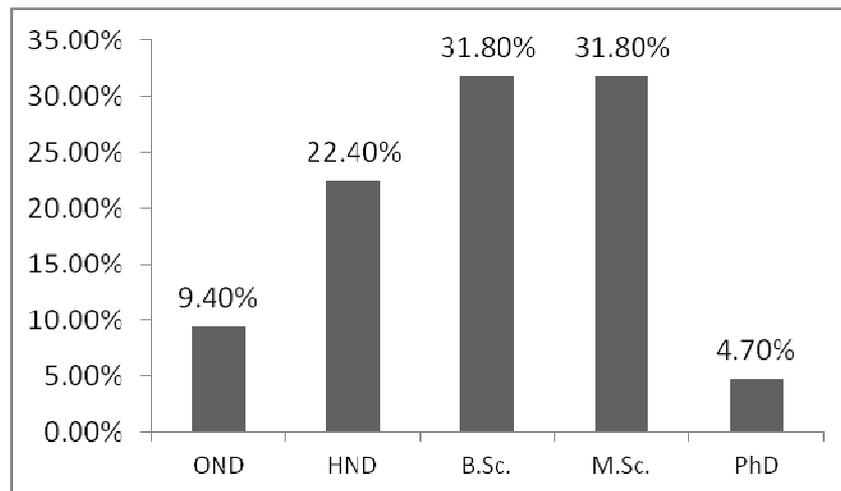


Fig 2: Bar Chart Showing Respondents' Educational Status

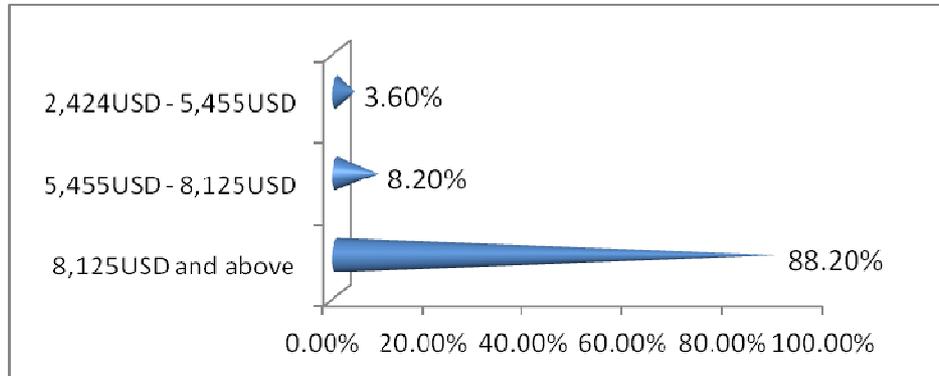


Fig 3: Conical Chart Showing Respondents' Annual Income (US Dollars)  
Exchange rate = 165 Naira = 1 US Dollars

Table 3 shows the sources from which the respondents obtained information. The finding shows that the most frequent sources of information for academic staff include; Internet =3.13, Journal publications =3.10, and CD-ROM =2.82. This finding agrees with the position of Madukoma and Opeke (2013) who stated that among others that information sources used by senior non-academic staff in Nigerian universities were mostly online (internet, CD-ROM, etc.), print materials (books, journals, etc.) while for non-academic staff, the most frequent sources of information include; Books =3.12, other colleagues =2.98 and Radio =2.95. The finding showing information from other colleagues as a major source of information to non-academic staff agrees with the finding of Madukoma and Opeke (2013) who posited that policy papers, subordinates in the office, easy access to information from colleagues, peers and superiors in the office are important sources of information to non-academic staff in Nigeria University. This simply indicated that Internet facilities, Journal publications, other

colleagues and Radio are important sources of information to the employees of the colleges investigated. This implies that the management of the selected colleges should make effort to ensure availability of electricity within the colleges for easy access to internet facilities and adequate fund should be provided to equip the institutions library with books, journal publications and other print materials required to provide information to the staff of these institutions.

#### Result and discussion of study's hypothesis

The analysis of the hypothesis using T-test statistical analysis as shown in Table 4 shows that there was significant difference between the information sources to the academic and non-academic employees of the selected colleges in Oyo State. This is not surprising, since an academic staff who is involved in paper publication and teaching for promotion and career development is expected to source adequately for information. However, this is not the case for non-academic staff.

**Table 3:** Frequency of obtaining Information from different information sources

Sources	Never	Rarely	Often	Very often	$\bar{X}$	Rating
Radio	<b>6(14.3)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>8(19.0)</b> 10(23.3)	<b>15(35.7)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>13(31.0)</b> 21(48.8)	<b>1.97</b> 2.95	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b> 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Television	<b>5(11.9)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>3(7.1)</b> 9(20.9)	<b>14(33.3)</b> 10(23.3)	<b>20(47.6)</b> 18(41.8)	<b>2.02</b> 2.90	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b> 4 <sup>th</sup>
Newspaper	<b>3(7.1)</b> 3(7.0)	<b>6(14.3)</b> 10(20.3)	<b>12(28.6)</b> 8(18.6)	<b>21(50.0)</b> 22(51.1)	<b>1.98</b> 1.71	<b>7<sup>th</sup></b> 9 <sup>th</sup>
Other colleagues	<b>14(33.3)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>10(23.8)</b> 4(9.4)	<b>8(19.0)</b> 18(41.8)	<b>10(23.8)</b> 15(34.9)	<b>2.29</b> 2.98	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b> 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Twitter	<b>29(69.0)</b> 30(69.7)	<b>3(7.1)</b> 9(20.9)	<b>7(16.7)</b> 4(9.3)	<b>3(7.1)</b> -	<b>1.61</b> 1.83	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b> 10 <sup>th</sup>
BBC	<b>23(54.7)</b> 18(41.8)	<b>5(11.9)</b> 13(30.2)	<b>10(23.8)</b> 9(20.9)	<b>4(9.5)</b> 3(7.0)	<b>1.57</b> 1.98	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b> 7 <sup>th</sup>
Facebook	<b>19(45.2)</b> 14(32.6)	<b>7(16.7)</b> 20(46.6)	<b>6(14.3)</b> 3(7.0)	<b>10(23.8)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>1.71</b> 1.57	<b>9<sup>th</sup></b> 11 <sup>th</sup>
Internet	<b>30(71.4)</b> 22(51.1)	<b>8(19.0)</b> 9(20.9)	<b>2(4.8)</b> 10(23.3)	<b>2(4.8)</b> 2(4.7)	<b>3.13</b> 2.17	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b> 5 <sup>th</sup>
Periodicals (Journals/conference proceedings)	<b>29(69.0)</b> 18(41.8)	<b>3(7.1)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>6(14.3)</b> 14(31.6)	<b>4(9.5)</b> 5(11.6)	<b>3.10</b> 2.02	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b> 6 <sup>th</sup>
CD-ROM	<b>15(35.7)</b> 18(41.8)	<b>5(11.9)</b> 12(27.9)	<b>20(47.6)</b> 10(23.3)	<b>2(4.8)</b> 3(7.0)	<b>2.82</b> 1.24	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b> 13 <sup>th</sup>
Yahoo messenger	<b>22(52.4)</b> 23(53.5)	<b>7(16.7)</b> 9(20.9)	<b>6(14.3)</b> 6(14.0)	<b>7(16.7)</b> 5(11.6)	<b>1.68</b> 1.97	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b> 8 <sup>th</sup>
2go	<b>31(73.8)</b> 34(79.0)	<b>6(14.3)</b> 8(18.6)	<b>2(4.8)</b> 1(2.3)	<b>3(7.1)</b> -	<b>1.47</b> 1.40	<b>14<sup>th</sup></b> 12 <sup>th</sup>
Books	<b>29(69.0)</b> 35(81.4)	<b>5(11.9)</b> 7(16.3)	<b>6(14.3)</b> 1(2.3)	<b>2(4.8)</b> -	<b>2.47</b> 3.12	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b> 1 <sup>st</sup>
Youtube	<b>30(71.4)</b> 27(62.8)	<b>4(9.5)</b> 10(23.3)	<b>7(16.7)</b> 4(9.3)	<b>1(2.4)</b> 2(4.7)	<b>1.50</b> 1.21	<b>13<sup>th</sup></b> 14 <sup>th</sup>

Source; Field survey, 2013

 $\bar{X}$  =mean

The bold ones are academic staffs.

**Table 4:** Differences between information sources to academic and non-academic

Variables	No of sample	Df	Mean	Mean difference	STD error of mean	t	p-value	decision
Academic and Non-academic staff	43	42	123.49	123.488	2.855	43.250	0.10	s

### Conclusions

Study concluded that employees of selected colleges of agriculture obtained information from many sources, but the most important of these sources include; newspaper, television, other research institutes and radio. There is significant difference in the information sources to the academic and non-academic employee of the institutions investigated.

### Recommendations

The study recommended the following based on the findings of the study;

(1) The institutions should improve on internet facilities to improve the quality of information the employees of these institutions are having access to through internet since many source for information through this medium; (2) The management of the organisations should make efforts to ensure availability of constant electricity supply to ensure uninterrupted access to information via television, radio, and internet; and (3) It is essential for the institutions' management to provide print materials for their employee since books is one of the important sources of information identified by the respondents, hence, concerted efforts has to be made to equip the institutions' library with up-to-date-printed information resources. (4) Very few of the academics staff reported to have PhD degree, the management therefore needs to encourage the academic staff to further their studies to PhD level, to improve their subject knowledge, teaching skills and career progression. (5) The study reveals that most of the respondents had few years of working experience. Therefore, there is the need for the provision of adequate information that will enable the employees to perform optimally.

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